

Touchstone

Surrey
Earth
Mysteries



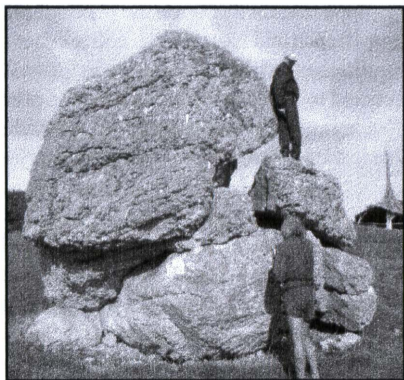
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SOCIETY OF LEYHUNTERS EQUINOX MOOT IN IRELAND 2010

Part 2

We visited another Irish centre on Tuesday afternoon, and one which seems to harbour rivalry with Tara - the hill of Uisneach. It is privately owned, but the farmer allows visitors if they come for permission, and he holds a Beltane fire festival here each year. There were many wattle structures around the site connected with this. It was the seat of the Kings of Meath and we were told its structures are older than those on Tara. We were told that seven roads converged here, and it was called "The top of the world". We approached it along what was said to be an ancient road linking the site with Tara, and came to the figure-eight shape of the palace of King Tuathal Techtmar (1st century AD)



The Cat Stone at Uisneach

and several other kings. Archaeology in the 1920s revealed Bronze Age structures and there are two souterrains beneath it, one in the shape of a mare and the other a stallion similar to the Uffington White Horse.

From the top of the hill there are panoramic views all round and it is said that twenty counties are visible. At the top is a huge glacial erratic called the "Stone of Divisions" or the "Cat Stone" (the latter because it resembles a cat with a mouse). It is also called "Umbilicus Hiberniae" (the navel of Ireland) and "Axis Mundi". It is at the centre of the island where the four provinces meet, and was said to be the gateway to the mysterious fifth province "Mide". There is a raised circular embankment surrounding it and it was customary for the

claimant to the high throne to "marry" Eriu here (the earth mother goddess after whom Eire is named). It was felt to be a powerful place and many of us said it had the best feeling of the sites we had visited. Laurence dowsed 320°, Major Lunar Standstill, as the main ley here. He had also previously plotted one to Main Macha, and another to Slieve Breagh and Mount Oriel.

Apparently some texts claim the stone was once surrounded by a stone circle, and it was from here that Geoffrey of Monmouth said the bluestones of Stonehenge originated. He says Pendragon and 15000 men were sent to Ireland to bring "The Giants' Dance" from Killarus in Ireland, which Merlin helped them to do. (Uisneach is in the townland of Killare). According to T. C. Lethbridge, there are diorite (bluestone) beds to the north of Dublin, some in Northern Ireland and some in Tipperary

to the south. When Lethbridge dowsed for the site he got no reaction from Preseli, Northern Ireland or Dublin, but the pendulum "went wild" over Tipperary. This is quite a long way from Uisneach, but the stones could have been taken there. It was quite sunny when we went to Uisneach, but as we were about to leave it suddenly changed and there was a quite violent thunderstorm with torrential rain as we walked back down the hill to the bus.



Mound and carved stone at Fourknocks

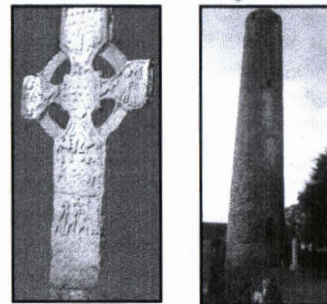
On Wednesday morning we visited the chambered tomb at Fourknocks, which has a lot of carved stones including a zigzag one, though the mound must have been refurbished as it had a concrete roof covered with grass. Another was called the Face Stone as it was said to be the only representation of a human face in the ancient carvings, though some expressed doubt that it was a face. Archaeologists found the remains of over 65 people here, with decorated pottery vessels, and personal ornaments including pendants and beads. Eileen Roche reported some earthlight phenomena here after some music was played, so I did an "Om" inside it but unfortunately nothing appeared for me, or on the photographs. Laurence has plotted two leys going through it, one to Slieve Breach and Newgrange, and another to Rath Colpa and the Baltray Stones. We visited the last mentioned next; a row of stones in line with Fourknocks, with the sea visible in the distance. There seemed to be a cairn on the hill in the other direction. The edge of one was on a midsummer sunrise line going to Rockabill Island, a rock with a lighthouse that should have been visible, but there was a tree in the landscape which seemed to be just in the way.

We next went to Drogheda to see the Millmount mound and Martello tower, and the view of the Hill of Slane from it. One of many legends regarding the origins of the mound says that it is the burial place of Amergin, an early Celtic poet, but it has also been suggested that it was possibly a large passage grave like Newgrange. It was fortified as a motte by the Normans in the 12th century and a castle was later built on its summit. The fort offered Cromwell the strongest resistance he encountered during the siege of 1649. About 1808, the old fortifications were demolished and the present Martello type tower was erected.

On Laurence's map, three leys are plotted going through it; one from Loughcrew where we were to visit at the equinox, the Hill of Slane, Millmount and Rath Colpa. Another comes from Carbury and Rath Maeve, and a third runs from Cloughpatrick through Millmount to Knocknagin and Breamore. The Hill of Slane was the next destination, where two of Laurence's leys cross - one mentioned above, and the other coming from the Hill of Tara and going to Mount Oriel and St. Bridget's Well. It is another panoramic vantage point from which Tara can be seen. There are the remains of an abbey there with an ancient mound behind it. St. Patrick came here in 433 AD and lit a fire on Easter Eve, which coincided with Beltane (the lighting of the New Fire is still done in churches to this day - another example of the christianisation of a pagan practice). This was illegal as no-one was supposed to light fires to compete

with the royal one on Tara, and the king turned out with his troops - but Patrick managed to talk his way out of it. A beautiful rainbow appeared when we were on the Hill of Slane.

Thursday was a very early start - we had to be away before 6.00 a.m., and the reason was we were going to one of the passage tombs at Loughcrew for the equinox sunrise, which also coincided with the full moon. The one with the equinox alignment is known as "Cairn T", and it has a locked gate over its entrance, but Laurence was assured that it was always left open for the equinox as they normally had quite a crowd celebrating the occasion. We arrived to find the gate locked and no-one there, and the sky entirely cloudy. No-one turned up with the key, though this did not stop a group of pagans experiencing the equinox, with a moving drumbeat as the sun rose (even though we could not see it) and it felt extremely energetic. The site is on the ley to Millmount described above.



High Cross and round tower at Kells

We went on to Kells to see the round tower there, one of many in Ireland, although this was the site of the writing of the Book of Kells, the famous illuminated gospel book that we were to see in Dublin later. St. Columba and his community came here when Iona was attacked by the Vikings, but they still suffered attacks here. The tower was used as a lookout tower and refuge; it had five top windows which overlooked the five roads leading into the town. After seeing this we returned to Cairn T after obtaining the key, and saw the beautiful carved stones inside it.

On to Lusk, where there was another round tower built into a much later church tower. It is the only remnant of another early

monastery that was here, which also suffered much from attacks.

Later that evening Pat Toms spoke on alignments and what they may mean. Eight months ago he was asked to give a talk about leys and wanted people's comment on this presentation. Alan made the point in his previous talk that searching for alignments comes with the modern perception of order and straightness. Pat was interested in the tendency to interpret alignments in physical terms. He has only been interested in leys for four years, as opposed to the many years of some present, and said he was interested to understand what the heritage is, and how to explain to young people what has gone on over the past forty years. He had looked at many texts, including every issue of *The Ley Hunter*. There seem to be many different perspectives.

He started with the view from the Necropolis in Glasgow, near St. Mungo's Cathedral. There is a legend from the sixth century, recorded in the twelfth century, that a yoke of oxen was set to wander; they sat down on a hill and a chapel was set up there which became the cathedral - and that they followed the "straight road with no path".

People have been interested in alignments before Watkins. Arthur Matthews in 1911 found that 10 out of 12 directions from Arbor Low circle in Derbyshire were marked by tumuli and stones, in a 30° and 60° relationship. He concluded the builders must have had accurate astronomical instruments. In 1915 a Glaswegian antiquary found sites in the area of the Boyne in Ireland had exact geometrical relationships. Watkins postulated "initial points" with which others were aligned, and thought the alignments were for trading.

There were other perspectives - one was dowsing. In 1933 dowsers found standing stones to be over underground streams. Another found water bearing fissures under a tumulus and thought the whole layout was like a subterranean web. In 1939 Arthur Lawton in *Mysteries of Ancient Man* found geometrical associations in the leys and postulated the existence of a cosmic force. Sites seemed to be at standard distances and he thought the distribution of force was the basis for an ancient system of measurement.

In the same year Major Tyler, of the Straight Track fraternity, questioned the track thesis as, considering Brentor, found it difficult to understand if 7 or 8 alignments meet at one spot, on top of a natural hill of lava. He found some ancient sites around Woodburn Church on concentric rings, his diagram could be interpreted now as being resonant rings and rays.

In the 1940s to 80s dowsing became more sophisticated. Guy Underwood in 1947 thought sites were deliberately laid out, determined by a "pattern of the past". He thought they were lines of electrical equi-potential, and that some vary with the positions of the sun and moon. But he made no reference to leys. Fifteen years later, in the 1960s, T.C. Lethbridge found fields of force at natural features which he associated with nymphs and spirits. The leakage between the psyche field and the earth field caused ghosts and ghouls (places with bad feeling). He thought it was the integration of the aura with an earth field of force. He devised a long pendulum for dowsing - the length could be adjusted giving particular lengths or "rates" for different types of object or attributes like masculinity and femininity.

There was a revival of interest in leys in the 1960s, started by Tony Wedd of Chiddingstone who connected leys with orthotenes - alignments of UFO sightings described by UFO author Aime Michel in France. Taking a quote from an American contactee he thought there were "magnetic currents, each of which is named and numbered, and where they cross is comparable to a cross-roads sign". The word "sign" he thought important as it seemed to indicate markers on the earth. He enthused Philip Heselton and Jimmy Goddard who started *The Ley Hunter* magazine, which continued under several editorships until 1999. John Michell in 1969 wrote that terrestrial magnetic currents were subtle, omnipresent and the ultimate problem to physicists.

In the 1960s others were finding other alignments. Richer, a Frenchman in Greece, found the temples fitted a zodiacal pattern (Some were accurate, some not, and some were missing). John Barnatt, in Stone Circles of the Peak, also thought there were zodiacal layouts. In the late 1960s Alexander Thom aligned sun and moon extremities, not just landscape points, and found sites were backsights for cosmic events. The standing stones at Baltray by the mouth of the River Boyne in Ireland are aligned to the rising midsummer sun behind Rockabill island.

Lamb in 1965 found that in old churches two streams of water at different depths cross under the altar. Also in that year, Muriel Langdon found old churches were on a complex system of hidden springs or domes - streams flow vertically and curve over. Many people were finding many different things. At Cairn T on this trip Pat had detected the crossing point of two fissures, and felt something spiralling up over them. In the 1970s Pettis found water domes and thought ley lines were something cosmic, originating outside the earth. Paul Devereux asked the question as to whether leys were channels of energy or a marking system indicating energy flows. He started the Dragon Project to investigate. Clive Bleadon in 1980 felt that ley lines were thought waves picking up good or bad qualities and changing wavelength. Sig Lonegren divided leys into "energy leys" and "topographical leys" since finding one without energy.

Some people steered clear of energy - for instance, Harry Bell who found prehistoric site alignments at Glasgow covering Camphill, Necropolis and others. Other ley hunters analysed maps - Robert Forrest did statistical analysis, including the Coldrum ley which Paul Devereux chose as a good ley for a TV programme. 447 potential sites were analysed for random lines, and Coldrum failed the test. He said that it didn't necessarily disprove all leys. In 1989 Pennick and Devereux wrote that many newcomers knew leys only as lines of force, which to them were a projection onto rather than learning from the land in the past. In 1999 Devereux declared that aligned sites as leys were dead. Some alignments might exist, such as corpse paths or "spirit flight" of shamans, but there is no network of straight lines.

There has been other ongoing research. Analysing hundreds of sites in southern Britain Tom Brooks finds many alignments and isosceles triangles, relating them and Alan Watts placement of sites in the New Forest with respect to the 'time' of earth's rotation, related to the nautical mile. Robin Heath and John Michell found the Stonehenge Lunation Triangle between Stonehenge, Lundy Island and the origin site of the Stonehenge bluestones at Preseli. There was a very lively debate after this talk, and on Friday, when we visited the ruins of the Cistercian monastery of Mellifont Abbey, Pat demonstrated work he has done on dowsing etheric influences in the landscape, and their importance in the siting of structures from prehistoric times through to church buildings and particular parts of them.

Mellifont means "fountain of honey" and the abbey has been ruined since the Dissolution of the Monasteries, although a new Cistercian monastery with the same name has been set up in County Louth. The bases of most of the walls remain, as well as the ornate eight-sided lavabo (wash house), and there are exposed sections of the bedrock visible in various places, including some near the site of the altar.

The first thing Pat noticed was a tree with a spiral twisted trunk to the north of the buildings, and dowsing this found it to be over an etheric "hotspot". These are caused by some kind of geological difference beneath the surface, which can be a crossing point of fissures, fault lines, intrusions of different rock or underground water. It is the geometry of the underlying structure which causes it. Mountains can also accentuate these points, as can structures built over them. They are not naturally in alignment, but sites on them which were aligned seem to have been sought for the siting of standing stones and other prehistoric structures. The tree in this case was, according to its internal growth guidance, growing straight, but because there was a spiralling upwelling its trunk became twisted. Other trees nearby, not on such a feature, had grown straight. Others among us found the dowsing reaction here, and at the other spots investigated.

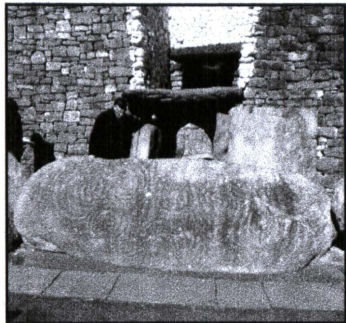


The spiral tree and the lavabo at Mellifont Abbey

Two other powerful hotspots were, as Pat predicted, in the centre of the lavabo and under the altar; there was a crossing of fissures under each. The course of them was followed and it was found that

doors had been sited where they crossed the wall of the building - this also seems to be a common finding, to let the influence freely flow. Pat feels the medieval masons knew of these things and that churches were sited in accordance with them, particularly the altar, which here was also found to be a hotspot with two fissures crossing. One of these could be seen as the bedrock was partially visible here on the surface.

On Friday morning, not quite so early (!) our visit to Newgrange had been planned. Our guide, Alan, told us that it was the "palace of the ancient gods", built 5,000 years ago, although there had been farming here for 1,000 years before that. The 40 mounds in the valley are called the "Palaces of the Boyne" - Newgrange, Knowth, Dowth and their satellite mounds. At Newgrange, the sun shines through the roof box at the winter solstice and illuminates the stone at the back.



Newgrange entrance and lion stone

The builders went considerable distances to bring particular stones here. The quartz stones, or Stones of the Sun, have a golden glow at sunset. These were brought 75 km from Wicklow. The egg-shaped granite pieces came from the Mountains of Mourne, 55 km away. The "grey wacky" blocks, weighing 1-10 tons, came from Drogheda, 15 km away. The land was all forested, with pigs, bears and wolves, so the journeys were not easy, although the Boyne was used for part of the trips. It is the most sacred river in Ireland; its name means "White Cow" and it is associated with the Milky Way, as also was the Nile in Egypt. To the later Druids, quartz represented youthfulness, and granite eternity. The quartz was male, the granite female.

The tomb was in use for 7-800 years, then something happened which may have been a mini-ice age. They may have believed the gods had left them, and activity here stopped. 1,000 years later people were back and built a large stone circle around the mound, which is the same size as Avebury and the Ring of Brodgar on Orkney. What do the carvings mean? It could have been something to do with the constellations. Entrance stones like these are found throughout Europe, but the highest concentration is in this valley. Was it a site of pilgrimage? Was it an ancient language, a labyrinth or a meditation stone? No-one knows. There were no wars at this time - wars began with the Bronze Age, when they did away with the matriarchy.

The roof box was pointed out above our heads as we entered the mound. We saw how precisely it had been built. There was no collapse in the middle, and this was built before Stonehenge or the Pyramids. The corbel-vaulted roof is original; the stones weigh 1-10 tons. How was it built? No-one knows. It is an engineering marvel. The little stones between the big stones balance everything, and act as shock absorbers. The dome has two buttresses - 4,000 years before buttresses! The mound

itself is built in layers - stone, soil, stone, soil. (This is just like a Reich accumulator, and is found widespread as a practice in mound building).

There is one chamber, which is cruciform with three recesses, and there was a basin in each recess. They had to have been put in before the recesses were built, or they would not have fitted - this shows a high degree of forward planning. The dead were put on the basins, but only five people were found here. They must have been ancient kings and queens. The right-hand recess is decorated most. In the famous tri-spiral, all the lines are going in the same direction. Is it the birth, death and resurrection of the sun god? It is like the Hindu sun god Om. The sun shines through the roofbox on to the ground, but it is not a cave, it is on a hill and the passage is S-shaped, representing a womb that the rays penetrate. We were surprised to see that the light box was now quite low down. After the tour we explored the area, and I was interested to see that one of the stones of the circle looked like a lion's head - I have seen similar shapes at a number of places, including Avebury and Lundy.

After this we returned to Dublin where we visited the Book of Kells exhibition at the Old Library, Trinity College (the University of Dublin). The Book of Kells is celebrated for its lavish decoration. The manuscript contains the four Gospels in Latin, written on vellum (prepared calf skin), in a bold and expert version of the script known as "insular majuscule". The place of origin of the Book of Kells is generally attributed to the scriptorium of the monastery founded around 561 by St Colum Cille on Iona, an island off the west coast of Scotland. In 806, following a Viking raid on the island which left 68 of the community dead, the Columban monks took refuge in a new monastery at Kells, County Meath. It must have been close to the year 800 that the Book of Kells was written, although there is no way of knowing if the book was produced wholly at Iona or at Kells, or partially at each location. It has been on display in the Old Library at Trinity College Dublin from the mid 19th century.

Later in the afternoon we had a Prehistoric Ireland tour in the National Museum. The first settlers, in Mesolithic times, were around 7000 BC, when the land was wetter and more forested. They were hunter-gatherers and returned to the same camps each year, mainly round the coast; some are now underwater due to rising sea levels. Some uniquely preserved Mesolithic fish traps were on display, as were Mesolithic microliths and hazelnuts from the time. The people were probably from Britain - possibly Scotland. There was also a model boat from the time.

By 3700 BC Neolithic agriculture had come - cattle, sheep, goats and oats. Stone axes were used, and surplus food meant there could be specialisation and stratified society appeared. The passage tombs were built with decorated stones, using precise engineering, shown by the light box at Newgrange. The Lurga logboat was found in 1902 - an incomplete trunk of oak. The Knowth macehead, carved from flint, was remarkable because of the difficulty of working that material. 70% of Neolithic art is at Knowth. There were also jade axes - there is no jade in Ireland, the nearest source is in the North Italian Alps. This shows there was communication with the continent. Copper began to be mined towards the end of the Neolithic.

The Neolithic was peaceful; from the Bronze Age we find weapons appearing. Gold was found with copper and we saw the thin crescent-shaped gold lunulae, intricately incised. Celtic crosses (crosses inside a circle) were seen, predating Christianity by centuries. Goldwork developed into torcs - much heavier, with bars and flanges and twisted. The Tara Bracelets, found in the Rath of the Synods, had a kilogram of gold. The terminals on these are unique.

There was a lull from 1100-800 BC, then gold collars were found with designs hammered from behind. They were deliberately folded in half and deposited in the ground, perhaps as offerings. At the end of the Bronze Age weapons became more common. It was becoming wetter and there was pressure on resources. There were now fortified settlements. From 650 BC to 300 BC there was little found, and no more pottery. The Irish language appears within 200 years.

On Friday morning we visited coastal mounds near Knockagin, Breamore, on a winter solstice sunrise ley from Millmount. Pat found fissures in the rock visible on the surface here. It was parallel to the one through Rockabill and Baltray. From here we went to see the closely situated Lady's Finger and Maiden's Tower. Two beacons mark the mouth of the Boyne and warn ships of the river bar at Mornington. The first beacon, known as Maiden Tower believed to be dated from Elizabethan times, is 60ft/18.2 m high, while the other is called the Lady's Finger, this is a solid round tower tapering to a point thirteen meters high. There is a local story that says a young maiden threw herself from the top of the Maiden Tower believing her lover had been lost at sea. She sustained an arm injury that resulted in one of her fingers being left sticking up and it is reputed that this is how the towers got their names. There seems to be a strong equinoctial ley joining the two towers.

We continued on to Mellifont Abbey to conclude the Moot; the findings here were detailed earlier. Returning to Holyhead on the Ulysses we had the bonus of a glorious sunset, with a track across the water towards us.

ANCIENT RITUAL OR ARTISTIC LICENCE?

by Bob Shave

Introduction



Sabine Baring-Gould

To the south-west of Godalming, the villages of Thursley, Tuesley and Peper Harow reveal the worship of pre-Christian gods by their place names. The first two are believed to be named after the Saxon gods Thunor and Tiw, respectively, while "Harow" means "heathen temple", "Peper" possibly being a personal name. So Peper Harow may mean "Pippera's Temple".^{1,2,3} In *The Place Names of Surrey* the authors speculate that the south-west of Surrey may be unique in England for the concentration of place names reflecting pagan worship.⁴ In the late 19th century the area came to the attention of the novelist and antiquarian the Reverend Sabine Baring-Gould. Much of Baring-Gould's writing concerned his native West Country, however his 1896 novel *The Broom-Squire* was set in Surrey, in the area around Thursley and the Devil's Punch Bowl which lies just to the south. It is interesting to look at this novel and see what it reveals to us about rural life in the area and folk customs which may be distant memories of ancient rituals.

Sabine Baring-Gould - *The Broom-Squire*

The roots of the novel lie in a real event which happened over a century earlier, in 1786. The event was the murder of an unknown sailor who was met by three men in the Red Lion at Thursley as he was travelling to his ship in Portsmouth. He bought them drinks and they then followed him and murdered him in the Devil's Punch Bowl. They were quickly apprehended at the Sun Inn in Rake,

West Sussex, tried and executed, and their bodies hung on Gibbet Hill, Hindhead, near the Punch Bowl. The unknown sailor was buried in Thursley churchyard and a memorial stone to him was erected on the Portsmouth Road near Gibbet Hill.

Baring-Gould's novel dramatises this event, with the added twist that the sailor is carrying a baby girl when he is set upon and murdered. The baby is abandoned in the struggle but later found and brought up by local people, having been given the name Mehetabel. The novel then picks up Mehetabel's story later in her life.

At the age of 18 Mehetabel is married to a Jonas Bideabout, who lives in a hovel at the bottom of the Devil's Punch Bowl. Bideabout is one of a group of local men known as "Broom-Squires", that is, they make and sell brooms from the chestnut and heather that grow in the Punch Bowl.⁵ Bideabout does not love Mehetabel and treats her badly. It is this loveless marriage which drives Mehetabel to take the action she does.

Thor's Stone and Mehetabel's ritual

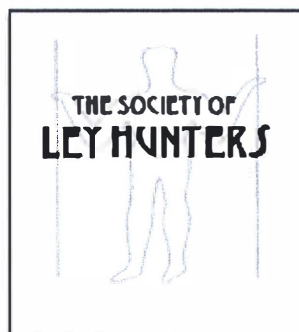
Mehetabel's mind is constantly distracted by thoughts of an old friend called Iver who she believes truly loves her. She decides that she must perform some sort of ritual to cleanse her mind of Iver so that she can concentrate more on her husband and learn to love him. The place she chooses for this ritual is Thor's Stone, on Thursley Common. Let us now read Baring-Gould's description of this place.

A considerable lake, Pudmere, or Pug-Puckmere, lies in the Thursley marsh land, surrounded with dwarf willows and scattered pines. Near Pudmere Pool stands a grey block of ironstone, a solitary portion of the superincumbent bed that has been washed away. It resembles a gigantic anvil, and it goes by the name of Thor's Stone. To this many went who were in trouble or necessity, and knocking on the stone made known their requirements to the Pucksies, and it was asserted, and generally believed, that such applicants had not gone away unanswered, nor unrelieved.

Mehetabel runs impulsively to Pudmere Pool on the night of a full moon, jumping between tufts of rushes in the marshy ground. On the way there she picks up a piece of ironstone that Baring-Gould describes as liver-coloured and liver-shaped. This will be her hammer which she will use to knock on the stone. As she approaches the stone a faint mist starts to settle. Let us now rejoin Baring-Gould's narrative.

After a while, and after deviations from the direct course, rendered necessary by the nature of the country she traversed, Mehetabel reached Thor's Stone, that gleamed white in the moonbeam beside a sheet of water, the Mere of the Pucksies. This mere had the mist lying on it more dense than elsewhere. The vapour rested on the surface as a fine gossamer veil, not raised above a couple of feet, hardly ruffled by a passing sigh of air.

When Mehetabel reached the stone she stood for a moment palpitating, gasping for breath, and her breath passing from her lips in white puffs of steam... she stood thus, with the lump of ironstone resting on the block, the full flood of moonlight upon her, blinding her eyes, but revealing her against a background of foliage, like a statue of alabaster... then with her face turned to the North away from



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the dazzling glory of the moon, Mehetabel swung the lump of kidney iron she had taken as hammer, once from East to West, and once from West to East. With a third sweep she brought it down upon Thor's Stone and cried: "Take him away! Take him away!"

She paused, drew a long breath. Again she swung the hammer-stone. And now she turned round and passed the piece of iron into her left hand. She raised it, and struck on the anvil, and cried, "Save me from him. Take him away".⁶

Questions will immediately arise in our minds of how authentic this scene is, in other words, is it a real location and a real ritual? The first question is easier to answer.

Baring-Gould's locations

Thor's Stone A paper by David Graham identifies a stone in the boggy ground beside Pudmore Pond which is likely to have been Thor's Stone⁷. However he concludes that the name is made up by Baring-Gould as he cannot find any trace of it anywhere else. The position of the stone is at the meeting point of three parishes, that is, Thursley, Elstead and Peper Harow, the grid reference being SU 907 416.

Pudmore Pool is more correctly called Pudmore Pond. Earlier versions of the name are "pudanmore" around 1150, along with the neighbouring "Pudmore Common" in 1668. Pudmore is likely to mean Puda's mor or damp land.⁸ The novel's derivation of the name meaning "the mere of the pucksies" therefore seems to be an invention of Baring-Gould's. David Graham says, "The stone by Pudmore Pond is set in the bog and is the only one where this scene would be credible to anyone who knew the area". Regarding the age of the stone, Graham quotes an entry in the records of the Court Baron dated 1767 describing the "Bounds of the Manor of Pepperharow". The stone is not mentioned among the landmarks delineating the boundary, for the good reason, Graham suggests, that it was not there in 1767, having been added as a boundary marker at a later date. We must conclude overall that Baring-Gould used real locations whose names he embellished in the story for dramatic effect.

Baring-Gould and Thomas Hardy

Any reader of *The Broom-Squire* who has come across the works of Thomas Hardy might spot similarities between some aspects of its plot with Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*. In particular, the heroines of the two stories have these points in common:

They are both trapped in loveless relationships

They are both accused of murdering their partners (Mehetabel is acquitted, but Tess is hanged)

Tess runs to Stonehenge and sleeps on the altar stone, where she is arrested at dawn.

Mehetabel runs to Thor's Stone where she performs a ritual by moonlight and is found by her husband and by Iver.

Tess of the d'Urbervilles was published in 1891 so it is reasonable to assume that Baring-Gould read it and borrowed certain aspects of the story for his own novel. It is interesting how both writers evoked rituals at stone monuments.

Conclusion

The Broom-Squire is an intriguing mixture of artistic licence and what may be tantalising glimpses of folk tradition and ritual in old Surrey. Something about the area, possibly the place names commemorating the pre-Christian gods, attracted a West Country antiquarian and stimulated him to concoct a story of passion and mystery.

References

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- 2 Ibid., p.200
- 3 Ibid., p.207-8.
- 4 Ibid., Introduction p.xii
- 5 Sabine Baring-Gould, *The Broom-Squire* (1896), chapter 3.
- 6 Ibid., chapters 21-22.
- 7 David Graham, *The Cricklestone and Thor's Stone: parish boundary markers on Thursley Common*, Surrey Archaeological Collections 88 (2001), pp.337-341.
- 8 J.E.B. Gover, A. Mawer, F.M. Stenton, *The Place Names of Surrey*, English Place Name Society vol. 11 (1969), p.168.

LETTERS

from Norman Darwen, Lostock, Lancashire

I enjoyed the article "Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and the E-Line" very much indeed. *The Hound of the Baskervilles* has long been a favourite book, and I have always loved the Basil Rathbone film version, even if the archaeology is somewhat error-laden! I also recently read the book *The Prayer of the Night Shepherd*, by Phil Rickman, in which the idea of Conan Doyle utilising English/Welsh border folklore regarding the hound is one of the themes. Phil is of course well-known as an earth mysteries-inspired writer.

LONDON EARTH MYSTERIES CIRCLE MEETINGS

7.15 P.M. Tuesdays, at the Theosophical Society, 50, Gloucester Place, London.

January 25 - Conserved Corpses: from Egypt to Evita, by Rob Stephenson

February 8th - Earth Changes and the Art of Transformation, by Marion Briggs

February 22nd - Thom in the East: Geometry in the Timber Circles of East Anglia, by Patrick Taylor

March 8th - The Lion and the Unicorn: the Guardians of Sacred London, by Chris Street

March 22nd - Children of Theosophy: Rudolph Steiner, Alice Bailey and Dion Fortune, by Ken Rees

April 12th - Open Forum and Social

Anniversary of the rebirth of ley hunting

June this year will be the 50th anniversary of Tony Wedd's *Skyways and Landmarks*, a small but significant publication which caused the resurgence of interest in leys.

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THE HIDDEN UNITY and BEGINNINGS

The Hidden Unity looks at the strange phenomenon of subconscious siting of ley points, and notes that places of worship, of all religions and all ages, tend to predominate on leys. The environmental and philosophical implications of this are discussed, and the apparent necessity of worship but irrelevance of doctrine. Two ley centres are given as examples, and investigated in depth - the Shah Jehan Mosque in Woking and the Guru Nanak Sikh Temple, Scunthorpe. There is an appendix by Eileen Grimshaw on the significance of the Pagan religion to this study. Illustrated with photographs, maps and line drawings. **£2 plus 30p p&p from the Touchstone address. Please make cheques payable to J. Goddard.**

Beginnings is about a series of potentially useful discoveries, mainly made by Jimmy Goddard over a period of about twenty years, but having some overlap with discoveries made by others. For various reasons, the investigations are all in their early stages, and some have not been continued. They include earth energy detection, natural antigravity, subconscious siting, ley width, and the solar transition effect. There is also a chapter on cognitive dissonance - a psychological factor which seems to have been at the root of all bigotry - scientific, religious and other - down the ages. The booklet is concluded with an account of the discovery of leys by Alfred Watkins. **£2 plus 30p p&p from the Touchstone address. Please make cheques payable to J. Goddard.**

EARTH PEOPLE, SPACE PEOPLE

In 1961, Tony Wedd produced a manuscript *Earth Men, Space Men*, detailing many claims of extraterrestrial contact. It was never published, and I had thought it was lost, though it has recently been located - Tony had given it to Timothy Good. To try to make up for the loss in a much more modest size, this booklet was prepared. As well as giving details of some of the more prominent contact claims, there are articles on the history of the STAR Fellowship and some of its personalities, evidence for life in the Solar System and investigation into extraterrestrial language.

£2 plus 30p p&p from the Touchstone address. Please make cheques payable to J. Goddard.

THE LEGACY OF TONY WEDD

This CD-ROM is an electronic form of the travelling exhibition Tony planned, using his voice, writing, photographs and drawings to illustrate his research and findings in the fields of flying saucers, landscape energies and lost technology.

£12 from the Touchstone address. Please make cheques payable to J. Goddard.

TOUCHSTONE is the newsletter of the Surrey Earth Mysteries Group. £2 for four quarterly issues from J. Goddard, 1, St. Paul's Terrace, Easton, Wells, Somerset, BA5 1DX. Please make cheques payable to J. Goddard. IF YOUR SUBSCRIPTION IS DUE AN "X" WILL FOLLOW THIS SENTENCE: